DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 345 508 FL 019 960

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TITLE Learning Teaching: "InterTeaching" and Other Views of the Development of Teachers' Knowledge.
PUB DATE Oct 91
NOTE 16p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Washington Area Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (October 1991).
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Classroom Techniques; *Cognitive Processes; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; *Learning Processes; Teacher Attitudes; *Teacher Education; Teaching Methods; *Teaching Skills

ABSTRACT

A discussion of classroom teaching addresses two questions about how teachers learn to teach: (1) What do teachers know and how do they use that knowledge to do what they do in the classroom?; and (2) How do teachers learn what they know? In response to the first question, it is proposed that teaching can be seen from three basic perspectives: as doing; as thinking and doing; and as knowing what to do. The last of these is seen as leading to the second question. In response to this question, three phases of teacher learning are examined: the foundation on which the prospective teacher begins to build teaching knowledge; the process of assembling knowledge; and the process of learning teaching over time. Finally a metaphor for teacher learning is suggested, drawing on the concept of interlanguage in second language learning. "InterTeaching" is defined as the teacher's movement toward effective and self-sufficient practice. The metaphor is found useful both for projecting order and rationale onto the highly individual experience of learning to teach and as a focus for further investigation of the process of learning teaching. (MSE)

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Learning Teaching: 'InterTeaching' and other views of the development of teachers' knowledge

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[Plenary given at the annual Washington Area TESOL Conference; October, 1991]

Introducing the Topic

Often when I am asked to speak at gatherings such as this one, I am asked to propose a topic. Usually the conversation goes something like this:

"We'd like to invite you to speak to our group"

"I'd be pleased to come... What would you like me to talk about?"

"Oh... well... that's up to you."

And then the organizer or I will often propose that I talk about my recent work-- what I've been doing lately... which is examining teachers' knowledge.

There is usually a dead or polite silence. "Teachers' knowledge?... Well perhaps you could talk about something a little less esoteric." Then sometimes by way of explanation, the organizer will say, "The audience will be mostly classroom teachers..."

These exchanges seem to happen more often than I would expect, to the point that I have begun to think about why they happen. Why do we assume that teachers may not be interested in what they know? Why do we assume that talking about what teachers know is an esoteric or theoretical undertaking?

Part of the answer must lie, it seems to me, in the status of teaching and teachers in the world.[1] Another reason is that examining what teachers know is a complex and messy business. It raises all sorts of questions: who should be taking the lead in such examinations; how should what teachers know should be documented and to what ends; and how will understanding teachers' knowledge help people learning to teach, among others. But we should not avoid these questions simply because they are complicated; I believe they are 'good' questions, ones which are worth pursuing.

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[1] See Sara Lawrence Lightfoot. 1983. "The Lives of Teachers" In Lee Shulman & Gary Sykes. (eds) *Handbook of Teaching and Policy* New York: Longman.

Also Michael Apple & Susan Jungck. 1990. "'You don't have to be a teacher to teach this unit:' Teaching, Technology and Gender in the Classroom." American Educational Research Journal, 27. (2). 227-254.

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So in keeping with the theme of this conference--'The Learner as Teacher and Teacher as Learner"-- I'd like to direct your attention temporarily away from students and what they do, to teachers as learners of teaching. I want to consider a question which has been central in my own work as a teacher educator and a researcher over the past five years, namely, how do teachers learn to teach? This question is actually a combination of two questions. The first has two parts: what do teachers know and how do they use that knowledge to do what they do in classrooms? The second question is how do teachers learn what they know?

These questions are as simple to ask as they are complicated to research, unravel, and to understand. I have organized what I have to say around these two questions. Into that structure, I want to weave examples from my work and research as well as examples which I will ask you to summon from your own classroom experience. And finally I will close the talk with a proposal, which I've referred to as InterTeaching. I think this metaphor offers a useful way of putting together much of what I want to talk about.

I. What do teachers know and how do they use that knowledge to do what they do in classrooms?

Teaching as Doing

When we begin to talk about what teachers know, we have crossed a great divide of sorts. In the world at large, teaching is generally seen as doing things-- as behaviors and actions which lead hopefully to other people's learning. Thus at best, teaching is seen as instructional, and often-- in the current state of American education-- as largely custodial. There is a major domain of educational research which investigates this view of teaching and learning under the paradigm known as process-product research. These are studies which attempt to correlate what teachers do in lessons--processes-- with what students do, or ultimately, with what they learn from those lessons--products.

In our own field, most of what is called classroom-centered or classroom-based research is oriented to this same view of relating teacher behavior to outcomes in student learning. Take, for example, the opening sentences of Craig Chaudron's book, *Second Language Classrooms*. Chaudron writes:

> This book reviews classroom-based research and attempts to provide confirming or disconfirming evidence for claims about the influence of language instruction and classroom interaction on language learning. This is achieved by comparing studies that describe teachers' and learners' behaviors in classrooms and synthesizing them into generalizations about the processes that take place in second language classrooms.[2]

The problem is that this view of teaching as doing vastly simplifies an extremely complex process. It simplifies the process of teaching by not attending to the role that the teacher as a thinking person plays in the process. Viewing teaching as doing separates teaching from the teacher who does it, thus supporting a view which is behavioral, acontextual, and non-personal. When we ask, "What do teachers know in order to do what they do?", we are recasting this view of teaching. It is no longer adequate to speak of teaching simply as doing, to talk about teachers' and learners' behaviors in classrooms" as Chaudron does, we need to speak and conceive of teaching as thinking and doing.

Teaching as thinking and doing

When we see teaching as thinking and doing, we reframe our view in important ways. Now teaching includes the crucial cognitive and affective dimensions which accompany and indeed shape the behaviors and actions which teachers do in classrooms. This view also opens a new realm of inquiry and study. If teaching has a cognitive dimension, we need to ask: What is it that teachers know? How is that knowledge organized? How does it lead to or become action? Since the late 1970's, these questions have motivated a domain of educational inquiry known as teacher-thinking or teacher-cognition research.

I think it is useful to hear how two early researchers in this area described the shift from looking at teaching as doing-- which we just heard in Chaudron's words-- to looking at teaching as combining thinking and doing. Introducing the proceedings of a conference on teacher thinking held in 1983, two researchers-- one Dutch and the other Canadian-- write:

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2 Craig Chaudron. 1988. *Second Language Classrooms*. New York: Cambridge University Press. p. xv.

See also C. Cazden. 1991. "Recent Publications on Classroom Research: A Review" TESOL Quarterly, 24, (4), 717-724.

> Looking from a teacher-thinking perspective at teaching and learning, one is not so much striving for the disclosure of *the* effective teacher, but for the explanation and understanding of teaching processes as they are. After all, it is the teacher's subjective school-related knowledge which determines for the most part what happens in the classroom; whether the teacher can articulate her/ his knowledge or not. Instead of reducing the complexities of teaching-learning situations into a few manageable research variables, one tries to find out how teachers cope with these complexities.[3]

So to understand how teachers cope with the complexities of their work, these researchers say we have to adopt a view which takes into account not only what teachers do, but also what they think about. This means looking at teaching from a different perspective.

Perhaps an example is useful here. Take teacher planning, for instance. When teachers-in-training are taught about lesson planning, they are usually introduced to the notions of objectives, of specifying the content or what they are teaching, and of blending that content into appropriate activities. The aim of teaching novice teachers to plan in this way is to help them organize what they will do in the lesson, to identify which actions or behaviors will carry out their purposes most efficiently and effectively.

However in the late seventies, when teacher-thinking research began to probe the actual planning processes which teachers use, some interesting findings arose.[4] These findings will probably not be new to you who are classroom teachers; in fact they should speak to your daily experience of planning. The findings are that teachers do not naturally think about planning in the organized formulae they are taught to use as novice teachers. Further, if they do plan lessons according to these formats, they often do not teach them according to plan. Teachers are much more likely to visualize lessons as clusters or sequences of activity. They will blend content with activity, and they will often focus on their particular students. In other

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3 Rob Halkes & Jon.K. Olson. 1984. *Teacher Thinking: a New Perspective on Persisting Problems in Education*. Lisse, Netherlands: Swets & Zeitlinger. p1.

4 See Chris Clark & Penelope Peterson. 1983. "Teachers' Thought Processes." In M. Wittrock (ed). Handbook of Research on Teaching (3rd edition) New York: Macmillan Publishing. 255-297.

words, teachers tend to plan ways of doing things for a given group of students, rather than to plan for a particular objective.

One experienced teacher describes her planning process in a forthcoming collection of accounts of teacher-designed courses edited by Kathleen Graves. This teacher is talking about teaching listening comprehension to EFL students:

> Although I do try to articulate objectives, my method of planning still begins with activities [and] visions of the class. It's only when I look at these visions that I can begin to analyze why I am doing what [I'm doing]. I also need to be in dialogue with students so it's hard for me to formulate things in the abstract without some kind of student input. .... so my planning process is based on layers and layers of assumptions, experiences and knowledge. I have to dig down deep to find out why I make the decisions I do.[5]

This example of teacher planning points out a further subtlety which raises problems with the view of teaching as thinking and doing. As this teacher points out, teaching is not simply thinking and doing, it involves context-- who you are teaching and why-- in a profound way. This may be why, when you ask experienced teachers about aspects of their work, they will often preface their responses with "It depends..."

'It depends...'

> At the TESOL conference last year, I remember running to into a colleague in the halls between session. This woman is a senior teacher and teacher educator, who I seem to only see once a year at the TESOL convention. As we talked, she mentioned that she had just come from a session which she found interesting. The presenter had asked people to rate various common techniques on a Likert scale, according to whether they would use them as teachers and whether they would like to have them used as students. The intent was to illustrate the parallels and discontinuities between what we do as teachers and what we prefer as learners. My friend said she found the exercise extremely frustrating: "How can I respond in that sort of exercise as a teacher?" she said. "So much of which technique I use depends... It depends on so many things."

If we stick to the view of teaching as behavior, we may be tempted to see such 'It depends' responses as reflections of the imprecise nature of what teachers know. In this view, the highest forms of knowledge are acontextual and abstract-- such as

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5 Barbara Fujiwara. "Planning an Advanced Listening Comprehension Elective for Japanese University Students" In Kathleen Graves (ed). *Teacher-designed Courses*. Cambridge University Press. (forthcoming).

grammatical knowledge for example-- and the highly personal and contexted, 'It depends' understandings which teachers bring to their work are difficult to measure, let alone assess.

If we see teaching as thought linked to behavior, we may see such 'It depends' statements as evidence of the individual and subjective nature of what teachers are thinking about. This can make measuring such knowledge according to some general standard-- as groups which are creating professional standards for teachers attempt to do-- very difficult and messy.

But if teaching is seen as knowing what to do, then the classroom context and the people in it become central and crucial. They are not just settings for implementation; they provide frameworks for knowing. In this third view, the 'It depends' statements which teachers often make are evidence of the highly complex, interpretative knowledge which they must have in order to do their work.

This third view of teaching as knowing what to do raises interesting questions and issues. For one thing, it suggests that teachers themselves, and not others like administrators, curriculum or materials writers, or researchers are in the best position to examine and define the knowledge-base from which they operate. For another, it suggests that the prescriptivism in much of teacher education and professional credentialing is largely pointless if the aim is guarantee qualified practitioners. Such efforts are simply missing the boat in a big way. They do not account for, because they cannot within their static and acontextual frameworks, these highly context-dependent ways in which teachers know what to do. This third view of teaching as knowing what to do leads to the second question-- which is the heart of this talk-- how do teachers learn to teach?

II. How do teachers learn to teach?

In considering this question, there is obviously a great deal which could be said. I want to focus on three questions: On what foundation do teachers build their knowledge as they learn to teach, how is that knowledge assembled, and what happens to the learning process over time.

The foundation

When teaching is seen as doing, learning to teach becomes mastering ways of doing things--specific behaviors and actions-- which are deemed as appropriate and effective in the classroom. The general assumption in teacher education, credentialling, and research is that learners of teaching-- teacher-learners-- are blank slates, that they begin their careers and their training with very little or no knowledge or understanding of teaching.

Reflective Exercise re. first lesson

> Think about the first class you ever taught... Where you were teaching, who the students were, what you were teaching. Recall what you did in the lesson. *How did you know what to do?*

If you think about your own experience starting out, or if you ask other teachers about theirs, you find this is not the case. Teacher-learners know a great deal about how to teach, although much of it may be mistaken or counterproductive. This knowledge comes from the natural continuity which takes anyone who enters teaching from the experiences being a student to that of being a teacher. Cindy- a Spanish language teacher in a study I have done[6]-- talks about the continuity this way

> "It seemed like the only way to do it [teach Spanish]. That's the way I had gone from seventh grade all the way through college and, you know, that was normal. And I had learned that way and there I was teaching Spanish, and these kids would do the same thing." [CB: GI: 8/17/90]

Sociologist of education Dan Lortie referred to the learning about teaching which we all do as students as our "apprenticeship of observation."[7] A major study[8] by the National Center for Research on Teacher Education [NCRTE] sheds some light on this "apprenticeship of observation." The NCRTE researchers write:

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6 Donald Freeman. 1991. *'The Same Things Done Differently:' :A study of the development of four foreign language teachers' conceptions of practice through an in-service teacher education program.* Doctoral dissertation: Harvard University, Graduate School of Education.

7 Dan Lortie. 1975. *Schoolteacher: A Sociological Study*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

8 The NCTRE study was a five-year examination of the influences of teacher education on classroom teaching in English and mathematics.

> Teachers acquire seemingly indelible imprints of teaching from their own experiences as students and these imprints are tremendously difficult to shake.

These "indelible imprints" seem to develop through a natural process of emulation; whether positive or negative these images of the teaching we received stay with us into our own careers as teachers. The mathematics of such influence is quite simple, as the NCRTE study explains:

> By the time we receive our bachelor's degree, we have observed teachers and participated in their work for up to 3060 days. In contrast, teacher preparation programs usually require [about] 75 days of classroom experience. what could possibly happen during these 75 days to significantly alter the practices learned during the preceding 3060 days?[9]

The knowledge which comes from the "apprenticeship of observation" which we experienced as students is not always positive. Andrea, another teacher in the study, makes this point:

> "I found myself falling into the pattern of the way I was taught languages back in the '70's. I thought it was boring [then] so why wouldn't they [students] think it's boring [now]. Just because I'm dancing in front of the room is not going to make it any better for them. It's still the same method." [AT: I: 3/21/90]

So the challenge to people who enter teaching is to move beyond the limitations of the teaching which they received as students. Again Andrea puts it very clearly:

> "I had had sort of a rotten [foreign] language experience in high school. I didn't like it; it was a bore, and I didn't get anything out of it. Then I lived abroad and loved languages and I thought, 'Well, can't we put these two together somehow?' I thought so many people-- such as myself-- had such a disservice in the classroom-- not being able to enjoy languages-- so I think I wanted to be a language teacher and hopefully try to bring out the parts that I like about languages and communicate that to my students." [AT: I: 6/27/89]

Taking the teachers' "apprenticeship of observation" as the foundation for what they learn about teaching accomplishes two important things. First, it forces

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9 Mary Kennedy. 1990. "Policy Issues in Teacher Education." East Lansing: National Center for Research on Teacher Education. pp4-7.

us to recognize that learning to teach is not simply a matter of mastering ways of doing things in the classroom; one also has to make sense out of what one does. And second, the process of making sense must be individual; it must proceed from individual experience. Which leads to the question of how is teacher's knowledge is assembled.

Assembling knowledge

Reflective exercise: A recent lesson

Think about a class which you taught recently-- within the past week or so. Who was in it? what did you do? How did the lesson go? *How did you know what to do in this lesson?*

If you contrast this recent lesson with the one I asked you about earlier, the first one you taught, I'd wager some interesting things emerge. First of all, the two lessons are probably quite different, so much so that perhaps you grimace when you recall your debut as a teacher. Yet no matter how much they differ, I imagine that you would say that what you did in your debut lesson made sense to you at that time; this is the second point. Teachers do what makes sense to them on some level. And third point, if you take the time to do so, you can probably see how you got from that first lesson to the teaching which you are doing now. In other words, you can trace the development of your own thinking, of your ways of making sense of what you do. When viewed over time, your teaching has a retrospective order to it.

These three points provide a critical framework for viewing teachers' knowledge and the processes of learning to teach.[10] First, people's teaching and perhaps more importantly the sense-making which underlies it, changes over time. Despite examples of fossilized, routine, or uncommitted teaching, it is critical to realize that teachers rarely do the same things for exactly the same reasons year-in and year-out. Teaching knowledge is developmental.

Second, people's teaching and their thinking are internally coherent; the lessons make sense to the people who do them. This is not as tautological as it may sound. Rather it is a call to us to recognize the differing and developmental nature

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10 For a discussion of these points, see Donald Freeman. 1991. "Mistaken Constructs: Re-examining the Assumptions of Language Teacher Education" In *Proceedings of the Georgetown University Roundtable on Languages and Linguistics.* (forthcoming) Washington DC: Georgetown University Press.

of teachers' sense-making. Beginning teachers' lessons will make sense to them as beginners; however to more experienced colleagues who know the ropes, their lessons may seem overly preoccupied with class management and discipline. So teachers' knowledge is not an abstract set of principles; it is contingent on the concerns and the situation of the teacher as a knower.

A major area of work in teacher-thinking known as teacher-expertise research has been concerned with just this issue. Studies have contrasted teachers with various amounts of teaching experience to see how they perceive the classroom, what they focus on as important within it, and how they determine their responses.[11] The assumption of this work in teacher expertise is that time and experience influence what teachers know and how they operate. The question is how. But the relation between time and experience is a tricky one to unravel: You may be familiar with the adage about the person who has had 'twenty years of experience or one year of experience twenty times.'

This issue of time and experience is far from resolved at this point in teacher-expertise research. However there are some recurrent findings which bear mentioning in connection with it.[12] First, it seems clear that teachers who are starting out do attend primarily to the structure of their lessons; their concern is to get through the class period in tact and in control. This is no mean feat, as I think we all can remember. Second, this concern appears to moderate after about three years of teaching, at what expertise researchers call the intermediate phase. After about three years, teachers seem to become more focused on the lessons themselves and less on how to control them. Finally, even expert or experience teachers, commonly classified as having five or more years of teaching, continue to see dilemmas or tensions in their work. Teaching is hardly all automatic, but it does move beyond explicit reasoning and attention to rules to what one expertise researcher has called "arationality."[13] The work of expert teachers is increasingly

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11 Carter, K., D. Sabers, K. Cushing, S. Pinnegar, & D. Berliner. 1987. "Processing and Using Information about Students: A Study of Expert, Postulant, and Novice Teachers" Teaching and Teacher Education, 3. (2) 147-157.

Carter K. & W. Doyle. 1987. "Teachers' Knowledge Structures and Comprehension Processes." In J. Calderhead (ed). *Exploring Teachers' Thinking*. London: Cassell Publications. 147-160.

12 David Berliner. 1986. "In Search of the Expert Pedagogue." Educational Researcher, 15, (7). 5-13.

13 David Berliner. 1988. "The Development of Expertise in Pedagogy." Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.

personal and addressed to individuals, it takes in the style of the teacher and the needs to the student.

So reflecting her concerns about getting through the lesson, the beginning teacher might say, 'It depends... on whether I can pull this off or not.' The intermediate teacher might say, 'It depends... on the activity, on what I am doing.' She is reflecting concern for what she is teaching and how she is teaching it. The expert teacher might say, 'It depends... on the students, on what I am trying to do with them.' This suggests the increasingly contexted nature of what these teachers think about, in the process of learning teaching over time.

The process of learning teaching over time

Researchers in teacher knowledge have became more interested in what they refer to as teachers' stories about their work, the narrative ways in which teachers organize their thinking and understanding.[14] To refer to what teachers know as their 'stories' does not trivialize it. In fact it calls attention to two important lines of argument about it. The first is a feminist view that teachers, who are primarily women, may well have unique ways of knowing. Images, metaphors, visual and narrative-related ways of organizing understandings, are often discredited in the world at large as intuitive, subjective, or common-sensical; but these may well be the vital substance of what teachers think. So the problem is not that such thinking is subjective or unsystematic, but that researchers, who often import their views from the hard sciences, have missed what they are looking for because they are using the wrong lenses.

A case in point is a fact which all teachers learn very early in their careers: namely, that teaching and learning are profoundly seasonal. September is different from December-- especially just before the holidays-- which is different from March which is different from early June. Similarly on a daily basis, 8:30AM is different from 11:45-- or just before lunch-- which is different from 1:30 which is different

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[14] D. Jean Clandinin & Michael Connelly. 1987. "Teachers' Personal Knowledge: What Counts as 'Personal' in Studies of the Personal." Journal of Curriculum Studies, 19 (6) 487-500.

D. Jean Clandinin. 1986. *Classroom Practice: Teacher Images in Action*. London: Falmer Press.

from an after-work adult class at 6:30PM. This fact can be trivialized as common-sense. However it becomes an integral element in how teachers plan, what they present, to whom, and when, and how they orchestrate lessons and manage groups of learners.

To give an example of this seasonal knowledge from another study I did, a high school French teacher, Maggie, was talking to a kid who had been rowdy and had had a hard time concentrating during the class which happened the last period of the school day. In what she says, Maggie displays such knowledge as she asks him: "What class do you have before this one?" Before he can respond, she answers herself: "That's right, you guys have gym. Well no wonder your energy's all over the place."[15]

The notion of teachers' stories is a powerful one in considering how their knowledge develops over time. An Israeli researcher, Freema Elbaz, makes the following observations of teachers' stories:

> Initially, a 'story' seems to be a personal matter: There is concern for the individual narrative of a teacher and what the teacher herself, and what [others], as privileged eavesdroppers, might learn from it. In the course of engaging with stories however, we are beginning to discover that the process is a social one: The story may be told for personal reasons but it has an impact on its audience which reverberates out in many directions at once.[16]

Stories have plots; they unfold in ways which are surprising and sometimes defy normal logic, yet they are deeply coherent. This is the first important point. When you looked back to your debut as a teacher, you could probably trace from it the beginnings of your professional evolution to where you are now. Stories are also, as Elbaz says, social; they engage others in a web of understanding.[17] And this is the second important point which is made when what teachers know is referred to as their stories. Their knowledge and understandings are built on social relationships; they are individually constructed within a social context of experience. Like others

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15 Donald Freeman, "Collaboration: Constructing Shared Understandings in a Second Language Classroom." In D. Nunan. *Collaborative Language Learning and Teaching*. Cambridge University Press. (in press).

16 Freema Elbaz. 1991. "Hope, Attentiveness, and Caring for Difference: The Moral Voice of Teaching" Plenary presented at the Fifth Conference of The International Study Association on Teacher Thinking; Surrey, England. pp8-9.

17 It is interesting that some corporations are looking at stories as vehicles to instill the lessons of company-culture [New York Times, Sunday October 13, 1991].

who work in caring professions, teachers are primarily concerned with the worlds of others. Thus it makes sense that their knowledge is primarily social and interactive-- that 'It should depend' on the context and those in it.

So let us reconsider this question of how teachers learn to teach in light of these three points. First, teachers build their new understandings about teaching in relation to what they know from their experiences as students-- on the foundation, for better or worse, of their "apprenticeship of observation." Second, as teaching knowledge is assembled over time, each phase has an internal coherence and logic to it. Teachers do what makes sense at the time, and what makes sense changes over time. And third, the process of learning teaching is a process of sense-making in relation to the environment and those in it. The story-like quality of what we know as teachers captures its wholistic and integrated nature, as well as the social ways in which it develops-- from the social experiences of being a student to those of instructing and caring for students.

Interteaching as a summary metaphor

All of which brings me back to the notion of "InterTeaching" in title of this talk. In 1987, I became intrigued by parallels between the young field of second language acquisition and the much younger one of research in second language teacher education.[18] I thought then, as I still do now, that we might fruitfully borrow, in a considered way, some of the concepts from SLA to help organize our thinking about how teachers learn to teach. This would not be a literal importation of concepts; rather it would be a transplanting of useful metaphors.

The concept of interlanguage seemed to me a prime candidate. Interlanguage, as you know, has two dimensions to it. There are the individual stages which learners pass through; these are referred to as particular interlanguages And there is the progression of those stages, which is known as the interlanguage continuum.[19]

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[18] Donald Freeman. 1988. "'InterTeaching' and other metaphors from SLA" Invited plenary at the MATESOL Conference, Boston MA.

----- ------. 1989. "Conceptualizing teacher education: 'InterTeaching' and other metaphors from SLA." Paper presented at the TESOL Convention, San Antonio, TX.

----- -----. 1990 "Learning to teach: 'InterTeaching' as the evolution of pedagogical expertise." Paper presented at the TESOL Convention, San Francisco, CA.

[19] Larry Selinker. 1974. "Interlanguage". In J. Richards (ed). *Error analysis*. Essex: Longman. pp 31-54.

Also, Rod Ellis. 1986. *Understanding second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

It is a powerful and useful metaphor which shifts attention from the endpoint or outcome to the process of learning itself. When viewed from an interlanguage perspective, language learners are seen as knowing something and as engaged in important activity, not simply as less-than-perfect users of the target language.

Interlanguage, as a metaphor for language learning, maps onto teacher learning in useful and provocative ways. Consider the parallel metaphor of InterTeaching. InterTeaching suggests that teaching has phases, each of which is internally coherent as a phase of InterTeaching, and these phases are linked together by a developmental logic, a continuum of InterTeaching. As with interlanguage, each phase of InterTeaching seems to be systematic and rule-governed for the teacher who is in it; it makes sense to the teacher at some level. And those phases develop according to a pattern which has both predictable and idiosyncratic aspects to it. Thus InterTeaching, as I defined it in that 1987 paper, can be described as the teacher's movement towards effective and self-sufficient practice.

The metaphor of InterTeaching is useful in a number of ways. It projects some sort of order and rationale onto what seems to be the messy and highly individual experience of learning to teach. And it suggests that there may be logic operating for the individual teacher, and -- in some broader and more normative way-- as teachers develop through their teaching careers. On this level, it can be comforting, for example, for a teacher (or administrator) to know that during the first years of work, she can expect to put most energy and attention into organizing and managing lessons. That this is normal and that people in teacher education and in school administration need to figure out how best to facilitate this phase rather than ignoring it.

But most importantly in my mind, InterTeaching makes us look at the process of learning teaching. Just as interlanguage helped SLA researchers to attend to the linguistic systems which learners were constructing, so too I hope that InterTeaching can enable those of us involved in teaching as teachers, educators, administrators, or researchers not to take the process of learning to teach for granted. Learning to teach does not happen just in teacher education programs, nor does it just happen on-the-job. Teaching is a complex and messy process which combines the individual and commonplace, the abstract and the particular; the real and immediate and the intended and hoped for. For this reason, we are not likely to

come to agreement on the endpoint of the InterTeaching continuum. In InterTeaching, we are not likely to arrive at the pedagogical equivalent of a native speaker. However the metaphor of InterTeaching helps to shift our attention away from the issue of that endpoint-- and discussions of standards and the like-- to how individuals are developing their classroom practice.

So Interteaching brings into focus the complexities of learning teaching. It suggests that there is logic to the process; logic in the internal coherence of each phase as the teacher makes sense of what she is doing and logic in the broader normative patterns of development. When we think about it in these terms, we can no longer talk about teaching from a behavioral point of view-- simply as doing things in the classroom. As we listen to teachers' voices and their stories, we realize that the comment, 'It depends,' doesn't represent fuzzy thinking; it gives voice to a deeper wisdom and understanding. Teaching must involve knowing what to do, which in turn does depend on a constellation of factors and influences in the classroom. So learning teaching means learning how to know what to do in the classroom, and that is very different than just learning what to do.

I do not believe we can clean up the complexity of teaching just by pretending it isn't there; we cannot legislate order into it. Nor can we simplify the process of learning teaching by making it a matter of mastering behaviors or even knowing theoretical concepts. Explanations and theories, prescriptions for practice, and standards for performance are each parts of the conversation, but they can also miss the point. They can mislead us into focussing on the activity of teaching itself, while overlooking the thinking which underlies it. They can also distract us from the hard fact that while teaching is an act of mind, as Mark Clark says,[20] it is perhaps more importantly an act in context; it is an act of knowing what to do. To put this another way, we cannot clean up the inherent messiness of teaching by ignoring the equally inherent complexity of what the teachers know.

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[20] Mark Clarke. 1991. "On the dysfunctions of the theory/ practice distinction." Paper presented at the annual TESOL Convention; New York NY.
And Donald Freeman & Aldona Shumway. (forthcoming). "Asking the right questions: Lessons in context"